



King County

2008 King County Comprehensive Plan Update Lake Desire Urban Separator Area Zoning Study Updated 1/23/08

Executive Recommended

Department of Development and Environmental Services

Summary

This 193-acre area around Lake Desire is designated Urban with R-6, six homes per acre, zoning. Several of the properties also have a Special District Overlay (SO) overlay that requires wetland management. The reason for the study was a Docket request during the 2008 King County Comprehensive Plan update that proposed a redesignation of the area to Urban Separator with R-1, one home per acre, zoning.

Background

The study area of over 200 properties is located within the City of Renton's Potential Annexation Area (PAA) at the eastern edge of its Urban Growth Area (UGA). Currently the study area is zoned R-6, six homes per acre. Some of the properties have a Special District Overlay for wetland management. The 80 acre Lake Desire is at the center of the study area and roughly half of the properties are on its shoreline. The other properties are adjacent or one property removed from East Lake Desire Drive SE on the north or adjacent to West Lake Desire Drive SE on the south.

King County owned park/open space lands border the entire length of the eastern and northern edges of the study area and roughly three-fourths of the western edge. The remaining portion of the western and the entire southern edge are adjacent to the Trovitsky Park and Cambridge at the Park residential housing developments. These two areas are also zoned R-6 and have been developed at a greater density than the study area. The Northwood Middle School of the Kent School district is located off the southwest corner of the study area. A Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife public fishing area is located at the northern end of Lake Desire. East of this state property is the Lake Desire 2 Natural Area made up of two King County owned

properties separated by a single privately owned property.

Roughly half of the eastern properties of the study area are mapped for either landslide or landslide drainage hazards. The properties in this area are on a steep slope that extends down to the Lake Desire shoreline. Many of the properties on the eastern side of Lake Desire have steeply sloped driveways. On the southern half of this landslide hazard area and extending further south is an erosion hazard.

A narrow band of Critical Areas Ordinance wetland extends through the northern portion of the study area to the shoreline of Lake Desire. The King County Lake Desire 2 Natural Area properties are within this band that goes into the McCarvey Park Open Space. A coalmine hazard covers the northeastern portion of the study area. A Wildlife Network passes through the northeastern area and along the eastern edge in Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park, before merging just outside the northeastern corner of the study area. The Docket request included photos of wildlife cited as taken inside the study area. Wildlife was also witnessed by King County staff during a site visit to the study area. In 1996 the Lake Desire management plan was implemented to restore water quality with a goal of 50 percent phosphorous removal.

Of the 200 properties in the study area, the majority have been platted to less than one acre in size. Only 13 properties are larger than two acres, with about half of these adjacent to each other in the northeast corner of the study area. The properties along Lake Desire's shoreline are predominately narrow and tightly grouped around the lake with little undeveloped area.

The Countywide Planning Policies call for King County and cities to implement Urban Separators. Different from the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands, Urban Separators are low-density areas within the Urban Growth Area that create open space corridors, provide a visual contrast to continuous development, and reinforce the unique identities of communities. Urban Separators can play a significant role in preserving environmentally sensitive areas and in providing habitat for fish and wildlife. They also provide recreational benefits, such as parks and trails, and meet the Growth Management Act's requirement for greenbelts and open space in the Urban Growth Area.

Applicable Countywide Planning Policy

LU-27 Urban separators are low-density areas or areas of little development within the Urban Growth Area. Urban separators shall be defined as permanent low-density lands which protect adjacent resource lands, Rural Areas, and environmentally sensitive areas and create open space corridors within and between Urban Areas which provide

environmental, visual, recreational and wildlife benefits. Designated urban separators shall not be redesignated in the future (in the 20-year planning cycle) to other urban uses or higher densities. The maintenance of these urban separators is a regional as well as a local concern. Therefore, no modifications should be made to the development regulations governing these areas without King County review and concurrence.

Applicable King County Comprehensive Plan Policies:

- U-117** King County should apply the urban residential, low land use designation: to protect floodplains, critical aquifer recharge areas, high function wetlands and unstable slopes from degradation, and link these environmental features into a network of open space, fish and wildlife habitat and urban separators. The residential density for land so designated should be maintained at one unit per acre, provided that lands that are sending sites under the Transfer of Density Program may transfer density at a rate of at least four units per acre.
- U-179** Urban separators are corridors of land that define community or municipal identities and boundaries, provide visual breaks in the urban landscape, and link parks and open space within and outside the Urban Growth Area. These urban corridors should include and link parks and other lands that contain significant environmentally sensitive features, provide wildlife habitat or critical resource protection, contain defining physical features, or contain historic resources. The residential density for land so designated should be maintained at one unit per acre, provided that lands that are sending sites under the Transfer of Density Program may transfer density at a rate of at least four units per acre.

Analysis and Conclusions:

This area zoning study was conducted in response to a Docket request to designate the 193 acre area around Lake Desire as an Urban Separator with R-1, one home per acre, zoning. Currently the over 200 properties in the study area are zoned either R-6, six homes per acre, or R-6-SO, six homes per acre with a wetland management overlay. The western portion of the study area is more intensively developed than the eastern portion. The eastern portion is not yet fully served by sewers, contains more steep slopes, and is adjacent to significant County-owned park and open space lands. It is reasonable to assume that as sewers become available to the entire study area, the pace of land development will increase.

Countywide Planning Policy LU-27 directs King County to establish Urban Separators on lands which are adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas or open space corridors. Surrounding on three sides of the study area are Trovitsky Park, McGarvey Park Open Space, and Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park. A portion of the Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park extends into the study area. These King County owned properties encompass roughly three fourths of the study area's

border. Additionally, the two properties that comprise the Lake Desire 2 Natural Area are within the study area at the north end of Lake Desire. These adjacent park and open space lands are predominantly adjacent to the northern and eastern portions of the study area.

The environmental protections and open space linkages of Urban Separators are created through low density, clustered development with one-half of the parcel dedicated as permanent open space. To be successful this requires a series of larger parcels that are adjacent to each other. Of the properties in the Lake Desire study area, only 13 are two acres or larger (see attached Lake Desire map). Only six of these properties are connected, combining for less than 22 acres in the northern portion of the study area.

The majority of the study area has already been plotted to parcels that are less than one acre. A redesignation to Urban Separator would have minimal or no impact in establishing significant open space on these properties. It should be noted that an Urban Separator designation would create linkages to open space lands to the north and east, and reduce the cumulative amount of development in the study area. King County Comprehensive Plan policies U-117 and U-179 support redesignation to an Urban Separator in the northern and eastern portions of the study area because of the potential to create linkages to the existing open space network...

However, the platting that has already occurred in the western portion of the study area, as well as the reduced possibility of linkages to open space for the properties on the west side of the lake, support continuation of the existing R-6 zoning in that area. Due to the subdivision that has already occurred around the west side of Lake Desire, a reduction in zoning from R-6 to R-1 zoning would have negligible impact on limiting density and creating significant new open space.

Executive Staff Recommendation:

Amend the King County Comprehensive Plan land use map to designate the northern and eastern portions of the study area (parcel numbers listed below) as Urban Separator.

2523059015	2523059056	3623059033	3623059079	3623059117	4008400310
2523059016	2523059057	3623059035	3623059080	3623059118	4008400315
2523059019	2523059058	3623059036	3623059081	4008400260	4008400320
2523059027	2523059059	3623059043	3623059086	4008400270	4008400325
2523059029	2523059060	3623059066	3623059087	4008400275	4008400330
2523059032	2523059061	3623059068	3623059088	4008400280	4008400335
2523059037	3623059018	3623059070	3623059090	4008400285	4008400340
2523059040	3623059025	3623059071	3623059101	4008400290	4008400345
2523059045	3623059027	3623059074	3623059112	4008400295	4008400350
2523059053	3623059032	3623059078	3623059116	4008400300	4008400360

4008400365	4008400395	4008400430	4008400460	4008400485	4008400520
4008400370	4008400400	4008400435	4008400465	4008400490	
4008400375	4008400410	4008400440	4008400470	4008400495	
4008400380	4008400415	4008400445	4008400475	4008400505	
4008400385	4008400420	4008400450	4008400476	4008400510	
4008400390	4008400425	4008400455	4008400480	4008400515	

Amend the King County Area Zoning Atlas to rezone the following parcels from the existing R-6 zoning to R-1.

2523059029	3623059078	3623059116	4008400390	4008400445	4008400490
2523059032	3623059079	3623059118	4008400395	4008400450	4008400495
2523059040	3623059080	4008400260	4008400400	4008400455	4008400505
3623059018	3623059081	4008400270	4008400410	4008400460	4008400510
3623059023	3623059086	4008400275	4008400415	4008400465	4008400515
3623059025	3623059087	4008400280	4008400420	4008400470	4008400520
3623059027	3623059092	4008400370	4008400425	4008400475	
3623059032	3623059101	4008400375	4008400430	4008400476	
3623059045	3623059112	4008400380	4008400435	4008400480	
3623059071	3623059113	4008400385	4008400440	4008400485	

Amend the King County Area Zoning Atlas to rezone the following parcels from the existing R-6/R-6-SO zoning to R-1/R-1-SO.

2523059015	3623059043	3623059090	4008400305	4008400335	4008400525
2523059045	3623059066	3623059117	4008400310	4008400340	
3623059021	3623059068	4008400285	4008400315	4008400345	
3623059033	3623059070	4008400290	4008400320	4008400350	
3623059035	3623059074	4008400295	4008400325	4008400360	
3623059036	3623059088	4008400300	4008400330	4008400365	

Amend the King County Area Zoning Atlas to rezone the following parcels from the existing R-6-SO zoning to R-1-SO.

2523059016	2523059027	2523059053	2523059057	2523059059	2523059061
2523059019	2523059037	2523059056	2523059058	2523059060	

Maintain the current land use designation of Urban Residential, Medium Density, 4 – 12 homes per acre, and R-6 zoning for the western portion of the Lake Desire study area.